

Having a breathing test to check airway sensitivity

Respiratory Physiology Unit

Information for Patients

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What is an airways sensitivity test?

Your doctor has asked that you have an airways sensitivity test. During the test you will make a number of fast blows into a machine before and after breathing in a spray of medication (Provocholine). The results of the test will help the doctors to find out how sensitive your airways are and what treatment you may need.

Why do I need it?

Airways sensitivity testing is done to help your doctor to understand why you may be having symptoms such as wheeze, coughing or chest tightness. The information from these tests will help to see if your:

- airways are too sensitive and how severe this is.
- airways are narrowing.
- lungs are smaller than we would expect them to be.

What will happen at my appointment?

You will be seen by a specialist in lung function testing:

1. We will measure your height and weight.
2. We will ask you to sit down and ask you a few questions to make sure it is safe to do the test.
3. You will be asked to do a few fast blows into a machine.

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4. You will then be asked to breathe in a spray of medication at different strengths. These may cause slight discomfort in your chest. You will be again asked to make a few fast blows into the machine.
5. At the end of the test you will be given an inhaler to make sure your airways are back to baseline
6. You can leave the department and continue with your day as normal.
7. A report will be sent to your doctor.
8. The doctor will talk to you about the results at an outpatients clinic, by phone or by letter.

How long will the appointment take?

You will be in the department for 30 to 60 minutes.

Can I bring someone to the appointment with me?

- You can come to the appointment on your own.
- You may like to bring either a partner, relative or friend with you. We ask they stay in our waiting area whilst you are having your test.
- If you need your partner or relative to be with you during the test due to caring needs please let the person doing your test know.

Contact details

If you have any questions or concerns before your appointment or you need an interpreter, please contact the department on 01162583420. You can also use this number to rebook or cancel your appointment

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